

Message Text

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PAGE 01 SUVA 00262 192244Z

ACTION OES-07

INFO OCT-01 EA-10 ISO-00 DLOS-09 INT-05 IO-13 COME-00

CIAE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 L-03 SS-15 NSC-05 CG-00

DOT-00 EB-08 /086 W

-----101840 192249Z /65

P R 160215Z FEB 78

FM AMEMBASSY SUVA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 7041

INFO AMEMBASSY PORT MORESBY

AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON

C O N F I D E N T I A L SUVA 0262

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: EFIS, FJ

SUBJECT: ESTABLISHMENT OF SOUTH PACIFIC FISHERIES AGENCY

REF: A) STATE 034308, B) SUVA 0241, C) PORT MORESBY 0221

1. DEPUTY DIRECTOR ROD GATES OF SOUTH PACIFIC BUREAU FOR ECONOMIC COOPERATION (SPEC) CONTACTED POL/ECON OFFICER TODAY FOR FURTHER DISCUSSION OF NEGOTIATIONS ON FISHERIES AGENCY.

2. HE CONFIRMED THAT NEXT MEETING IS NOW PLANNED FOR ONE WEEK IN EARLY JUNE.

3. DEVICE OF TWO SEPARATE DOCUMENTS IS BELIEVED NOW TO BE ACCEPTABLE TO A GREATER OR LESSER EXTENT BY ALL FORUM MEMBERS, ACCORDING GATES, AS MEANS OF RECONCILING DIVERGENT POSITIONS AND MIGRATORY SPECIES:

A. A CONVENTION ESTABLISHING THE AGENCY, WITHOUT RECOGNITION OF SOVEREIGNTY OVER MIGRATORY SPECIES AS A CONDITION OF MEMBERSHIP.

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PAGE 02 SUVA 00262 192244Z

B. A SHORT DECLARATORY TREATY STATING THAT SIGNATORY COUNTRIES (FORUM MEMBERS AND POSSIBLY FRANCE AND THE U.K.) HAVE SOVEREIGNTY AS COASTAL STATES OVER MIGRATORY SPECIES. UNDERSTANDING IS THAT PAPUA NEW GUINEA RELUCTANTLY ACCEPTS THIS AS PROBABLY THE ONLY MECHANISM POSSIBLE AND IS WILLING TO DRAFT IT, ALBEIT STILL THREATENING (IN WRITING TO SPEC) NOT TO JOIN AGENCY. THIS IS BELIEVED TO BE BLUFF. PNG IN LONG HAUL WOULD NOT WANT TO BE

EXCLUDED FROM AGENCY. GATES POINTED OUT THAT VIEWS OF PRIME MINISTERS AT FORUM MEETINGS DIFFERED IN SOME RESPECTS FROM VIEWS EXPRESSED BY INDIVIDUALS AT THE NOVEMBER FISHERIES AGENCY MEETING IN SUVA.

C. GATES REQUESTED THAT WE QUERY WASHINGTON AS TO WHETHER OR NOT THE U.S. WOULD FIND IT EMBARRASSING TO HAVE BOTH DOCUMENTS UNDER CONSIDERATION AND OPEN FOR SIGNATURE AT THE JUNE MEETING. HE BELIEVES IT DESIRABLE TO IMPLEMENT BOTH DOCUMENTS AT THAT TIME. IF NOT CONSIDERED AT FISHERIES AGENCY MEETING THE DECLARATORY TREATY WOULD EMANATE FROM SOUTH PACIFIC FORUM MEETING IN LATE AUGUST. FORUM COUNTRIES ARE BELIEVED TO BE IN AGREEMENT THAT PRINCIPLE OF SOVEREIGNTY OF COASTAL STATES OVER MIGRATORY SPECIES MUST NOT BE WEAKENED, ACCORDING GATES.
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